

I am the good Shepherd.
John 10:11

The Shepherd

I AM THE DOOR OF THE SHEEP. John 10:7.

The good Shepherd giveth
his life for the sheep.
John 10:11

Volume 20

Postmaster: In matter concerning mailing write
Rev. Josef B. Haave, Rose Valley, Sask.

Winnipeg, Manitoba, Second No. in June, 1944

No. 12

Third Sunday after Trinity HE CARES

Epistle 1 Peter 5: 6-11.

"Casting all your anxiety upon him, because he careth for you." —1 Peter 5:7.

It is easy to say to people, "Don't worry!" But if that is the only comfort we can bring them in their troubles or afflictions, then it may not be so easy for them to follow our advice. When we on the other hand have something positive to offer the proposition becomes quite different. To one who takes the attitude that nobody cares, it is good to be able to say, "God cares for you." Do not throw away your life in sinful practices; do not wear yourself out with unnecessary worries. God is watching over you. He is concerned about you, and about your affairs.

From the epistle text today as well as from the verse preceding the text, we learn that afflictions come from two sources; from God to humble the proud, and from Satan who seeks "whom he may devour." "God resisteth the proud but giveth grace to the humble", V. 5. Pride is really an assertion of "self" against another person, or against God. Often we need to be humbled "under the mighty hand of God." Fortunate are we, when we recognize the pierced hand as the one which holds the chastening rod. The afflictions that God sends us are directed only against our flesh to help us to subdue it. How different with the afflictions that come from our adversary, the devil. His purpose is not to educate men to humility. He desires to separate us from God. His afflictions are aimed at the destruction of our soul's life in God. Therefore he tempts us to sin, to rebellion against God, and to be callous to one's spiritual needs. It takes soberness and vigilance to ward off the cunning attacks of the adversary. When God's chastening and correcting hand is upon an erring child, then Satan may come and tempt the child of God to doubt His goodness and love because of the afflictions He permits to come upon him.

Under all circumstances cast your anxiety upon God, because He cares for you. If He must humble you it is in order "that He may exalt you in due time." His purpose is to bring you into a closer fellowship with Himself. He cares for you also in the hour of temptation, when the attacks of the devil are severe. To Peter Jesus once said, "Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; and when thou hast turned again strengthen thy brethren." (Luke 22: 31-32.) Peter had gone through temptations. He had not steered clear of pride; he had not watched out for the adversary. He had sinned even to the extent of denying his Lord. But Peter had also wept over his sins and as a penitent sinner he had experienced the Saviour's forgiving love. Peter knew the heart of his Saviour who had prayed for him. No wonder that God could use him to warn us against our adversary the devil who as a roaring lion walks about seeking whom he may devour." And in the same time the invitation is extended to us to cast all our anxieties upon Him. May we do just that. Go to God in the hour of temptation "that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." God knows what is best for us, let us bring our worries to Him. "To Whom be the glory and dominion for ever and ever." Amen!

—J. P.

Cheerful forgiveness of an undeserving fellow mortal is like reaching him a rare rose. Thus to be reconciled to a debtor brings no regrets. Rays of rare light reach and warm within in the hour of such sincere forgiveness.

People who have half an hour to spare usually spend it with somebody who hasn't.



Dr. Iver Iversen was elected to Seminary Professorship at Luther Theological Seminary, Saint Paul, Minnesota at the General Convention.

"There's No Place Like Home"

By home this time we mean our own church. There may be better singing, for instance, at the neighbors. Possibly, even better preaching. That is, you may find more entertainment over there. Or to put it in other words, some other church may afford "eats" more to your taste. But observation shows that nine times out of ten our spiritual health is not improved by this change of diet. It does not make for Christian character. Nor does it strengthen our sense of duty and loyalty and disinterested service.

There are times when we may accept an invitation to the neighbors, or drop in for a visit. But if this becomes a practice we soon become spineless and of no particular use where we belong. Church hobos are not an asset to our own household of faith. Yes, our faith, too, becomes "shot" and before long we find ourselves at sea, floaters adrift.

Our own natural mother may not be perfect, but we would hardly think of discarding her for some other mother. Why, then, neglect our mother-church who has borne us, nourished us, sacrificed for us and cherishes high hopes for us as we grow up and could be of some help to her at home? She loves us as no one ever will. Why be an ingrate who spurns her love?

The important thing after all is not our own pleasure. The important thing is to be of use to her and to our brothers and sisters. The important thing is to make a real contribution to the life of the family. For it is profoundly true that "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

To bring grief to those who need assistance and encouragement in maintaining the home does not pay. It weakens the hands of those who are faithful to their trust, and our spiritual life is seriously impoverished. Our interest wanes, our love grows cold and our happiness dies, while the cause we are in duty bound to promote suffers defeat because of the slackers who should be willing soldiers in the campaign. Unselfish devotion to the work, in which we should be engaged and which requires our active support, insures a reward far greater than the indulgence of wilful meandering and a finical appetite.

Here is where a conscientious Christian may ask, "What would Jesus have me do?" and let His answer determine the course of action.

CJS.

"To live in hearts we leave behind is not to die."

To My Son Overseas

By Martha Snell Nicholson

Sometimes I used to say to you
When you went out to play,
"Good-by, my child, be careful, and
Be my good boy today."

And then I tried to school my heart
And trust you to God's care.
Again I send you forth, — again
I trust Him. This my prayer:

"Dear Lord, be with this boy of mine
Wherever he shall be,
And keep him straight and strong and fine;
Incline his heart toward Thee.

When he is weak be Thou his strength;
When tired, his resting place;
In battle be his sure defense,
And give to him Thy peace.

Teach him to pray — to seek Thy face.

Ah, Lord, the thought is sweet
That they may meet, his prayers and mine,
Before Thy mercy seat!

Nor for my boy alone I pray
In tears before Thy face, —
For every mother's son I plead;
Lord, save them by Thy grace!
S.S. Times.

Reading the Bible Through

A strange impulse seized me sometime ago. I was to read the Bible from cover to cover and to allow no other reading whatsoever to interfere. Whether this impulse was of the Holy Spirit, I know not. God knoweth. Anyway I did it. I averaged four and one-half hours each day in His Holy Word. I began with, "In the beginning", Gen. 1:1, and closed with, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you", Rev. 22:21.

It was a marvelously enriching and strengthening experience. My heart can never escape the power and glory of it.

It was a feast of good things to eat. I ate locusts and wild honey with the Baptist in the wilderness, and heaven-sent manna with the wandering Israelites in the desert. I tasted the grapes of Eschol, and sat at the tables of King David and King Solomon. I drank of the brook of Cherith, and was fed by the ravens. I feasted with the disciples in the upper room and sat down at the table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

It was a triumphant tour of summer trips. I crossed the desert sands with Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees. I journeyed with Joseph in the land of the Pharaohs and followed Moses for forty years. I went abroad in the ships of Tarshish and glided in fishing smacks on the placid bosom of Galilee.

It was a university course. I studied the most accurate science of all the centuries concerning the origin of things. I delved into the world's profoundest philosophy, read classic literature, followed the divine outlines of history, and was thrilled by the tenderest and sweetest poetry of all time.

It was a Bible Conference. Doctor Moses, Isaiah and Paul were the principal speakers. I sat at their feet in rapt attention. There were classes in theology and ecclesiology and eschatology and prophecy. There were many discussions, conferences and even debates on practical and doctrinal subjects. It was the greatest Bible Conference I ever attended. King David with his harp of gold and choir of a thousand voices led the music.

Such a blessing as this, reading the Bible through without unnecessary delay. I think I shall reread it at least once a year the rest of my life.

—M. E. Dodd, in
"Programs on the Bible."

TOPICS OF INTEREST

Money

"People have so much money that they do not know what to do with it." Some folks say that these days. Strictly speaking, it may not be quite true, but it does emphasize that there is more money among us than usual. It ought to be a good time, then, to consider what God wants us to do with this money that He in His providence has apportioned us.

First, God wishes to be recognized as the Giver of these material blessings. Because of His favor we should know Him better, praise Him more heartily, and trust His goodness more implicitly. Do we let prosperity do this for us? Or does our evil heart make the day of prosperity bear witness against us of what ungrateful and wicked beings we are?

Secondly, God has given us money, goods and property for food, clothing and things we need for ourselves and our dear ones. How sad that many do not spend their money for that, but for what impoverishes and destroys. Shall this day of prosperity witness against you that you have rioted in vanity, gluttony and drunkenness, destroying body, mind and soul?

Furthermore, God wants us to do good to others. Needy ones lie at our gate—not only an occasional Lazarus longing for crumbs of bread and with physical sores that await healing, but much more, many a benighted one who longs for the healing that Christ alone can bring. Who are they? I see our youth looking for guidance. Give them Christ as the piloting truth in their education. I see older folks wrecked by heartache and disappointment. Let them experience Christ as the motivating power in our program of Charities. I see in foreign lands the heathen whose very darkness cries to us for the light of the Gospel that Christ commands us to bring to all nations. I see heathen in our own land—some known by numbers instead of names, more just have names, a few have titles before and after their names. But despite number, name, or titles all have the same need of God's salvation. Our money can bring Christ to many who are without God and without hope in the world.

Lastly (as was pointed out at our convention) this is a false prosperity and is here because sons and brothers are bleeding and dying on fields of battle. If we have Christ's love in our hearts we will not use this blood-stained money for selfish pleasures but to build God's Kingdom of peace on earth.

To have money is not sin. But the Bible emphasizes both the opportunities for good and the temptations for evil that accompany its possession. Let us not be ungrateful to God, unmerciful to our fellowmen nor self-indulgent and self-destroying, but use our means to save souls for God's Kingdom and "make to ourselves friends by means of the mammon of unrighteousness."

O, Let Christ have complete control of the heart—and of the purse.

—A. K. H.

On a Chapel Door

Here is a quiet room,
Pause for a little space,
And in the deepening gloom
Pray for God's grace.

Let no unholy thought
Enter thy musing mind,
Things that the world hath wrought,
Unclean, —untrue, —unkind,
Leave them behind.

Pray for the strength of God,
Strength to obey His plan,
Rise from thy knees less clad
Than when thy prayer began,
More of a man.

—Lutheran Companion.

The SHEPHERD — HYRDEN

Organ of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of Canada.

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Published: 5th and 20th of the month
Subscription price: 50 cents per year.

Articles, news, announcements send to the Editor. Money for the paper and change of address send to the Business Manager. When renewed before the expiry date shown on the address label the subscription will not be stopped. The subscription will not continue if left unpaid.

Entered as second class matter at the Post Office at Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Printed by
THE CHRISTIAN PRESS, LIMITED
Winnipeg, Man.

The General Convention

The Sixteenth General Convention is now history. It was a convention of outstanding importance. That this convention was held in wartime was impressively brought to the conventioners in the memorial service Tuesday morning. A sense of seriousness in a special way pervaded the sessions. The service flag dedicated on that first morning was a silent reminder that as we met in convention, loved ones faced grim realities of modern war.

The resolution for the change of the name of the church came on Wednesday afternoon. A motion "that the vote on the change of name be taken with no discussion" was not adopted. It is well that this motion failed to get a two-thirds majority vote required. About twenty speakers took part in the discussion before the vote was taken. A moderate and kindly spirit prevailed. A vote was taken on the Church Council resolution: "The church votes that the necessary steps for changing the name of the church be taken at this convention." The result was: In favor 766 Against 269. A committee of three was appointed by the president to bring in the proper amendment to the constitution, and suggest a new name.

On Friday the committee reported. Trial ballots were taken. There was no unanimity. The committee was asked to consider the matter again. This committee reported Saturday morning bringing in the name "The Evangelical Lutheran Church".

Men who had proposed other names, now stood forth and pleaded for a unanimous vote on the name presented. In this moving moment one sensed that we were witnessing the answer to the prayers of our praying people. Truly the Lord can bend the hearts of men like the "water brooks". A deep spirit of thankfulness found expression in singing "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow."

Vitally affecting Canada District was the election of Dr. Iver Iversen our beloved district president to the chair of Church History at Luther Seminary, Saint Paul, Minnesota. We pray that the Lord will lead Dr. Iversen in his decision.

Other matters of great importance were decided. These will be referred to in later issues of the Shepherd.

The month of July is usually filled with convention and Bible Camps. These meetings call for prayer. God is able to do exceeding abundantly above all the we ask or think. Let us join in prayer for God's blessings.

Bekjendtgjørelse

Søndre Saskatchewan Indremissionsforening afholder sin vanlige Bibeluge fra og med den 2den Juli til den 9de Juli i Torquay, Sask., med Pastor A. K. Odland som hovedtaler. Bed for møderne og kom og ver med og Herren skal rigelig velsigne.

S. Knutson.
L. Lee.

Vi tillater os at optrykke Redaktør Jorgensens bemerkninger angaaende Fellesmøtets bestemmelse om Kirkens navn. Vi mener at saken kan ikke bedre forklares end det som Redaktør Jorgensen skrev i

Lutheraneren angaaende forhandlingerne og det avgjørende utfald i navnesaken.

—V.

*

THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Den Evangeliske Lutherske Kirke

Overskriften viser det navn som vaar kirkes fellesmøte entes om aa sette i det forslag til konstitusjons-ndring som blev antatt paa lørdag 3 juni. Først er det gitt paa engelsk, — den eneste offisielle form. Det norske navn som staar under det engelske, er en direkte oversettelse av den engelske form.

Det vil erindres fra forrige nummer at det avgjørende øieblikk i navnebytte-saken kom paa onsdag kveld 31 mai. Da gjaldt saken ikke direkte den konstitusjons-ndring som et navnebytte vil medføre, men selve kjernen i saken: om flertallet av menighetenes kaarne og kirkens presteskaper ansaa kirkens historiske *norske* navn som en hindring eller ei. Som før fortalt, erklærte mer enn ¾ av møtets stemmeberettede ved stemmekastning at navnet efter deres syn paa saken var en hindring. Dermed er den sak avgjort. Den kommer alt-saa ikke op til behandling ved fellesmøtet i 1946. Derimot maa forslaget til konstitusjons-ndring, det som fastsetter det nye navn, behandles igjen paa fellesmøtet to aar fra nu. Og det maa antas med et ¾ flertall av alle de som er berettiget til aa stemme paa den tid stemmekastningen skjer. Sannsynlig er det at amendementet opnaar med letthet en slik majoritet, da det jo i aar blev enstemmig antatt. For det blev selve forslaget til endring av konstitusjon og inkorporasjonsartikler, derimot ikke forslaget om navnebytte, som før nevnt.

Vaar kirke beholder alt-saa offisielt i to aar til det navn den hittil har baaret, nemlig Den Norsk Lutherske Kirke i Amerika. Fra og med fellesmøtet i 1946 blir det med all sannsynlighet. *Den Evangeliske Lutherske Kirke*.

Fellesspresidenten utnevnte paa torsdag 1 juni en tremannskomite til aa utarbeide forslag til konstitusjons-ndring. Den bestod av kirkens generalsekretær, dr. Bergsaker, Søndre Minnesota distrikts tilsynsmann, dr. Kleven, og dr. C. O. Pedersen, forstander for diakonisseanstalten i Brooklyn, N.Y. Dr. Bergsaker hadde tatt liten direkte del i ordsifftet om navnebyttet. Dr. Kleven hørte til de mest ivrige navneforandrere. Dr. Pedersen hadde skrevet og talt imot. Dagen efter forelaa denne komites forslag, med navnet *The Lutheran Church in America* (den Lutherske Kirke i Amerika). Forslaget møtte megen motstand. Det ene navn efter det annet blev foreslaatt. Blandt de foreslaatte navn var følgende: The National Lutheran Church, The United Lutheran Synod, The Augsburg Lutheran Church, The Northern Lutheran Church, Trinity Lutheran Church, samt baade The Evangelical Lutheran Church og The Lutheran Evangelical Church. Ved en prøveavstemning fikk følgende tre de fleste stemmer: 1. The Lutheran Church in America, 2. The National Lutheran Church, 3. The United Lutheran Synod. Om de to navn med *Evangelical* i blev regnet sammen, var dog det nr. tre. Nok en prøveavstemning viste parktiske talt samme resultat, med den undtagelse at "National" og "United" hadde byttet plass.

Paa lærdag morgen paapekte fellesspresidenten at saken nu stod i stampe, og han utnevnte igjen samme komitee til aa komme med nytt forslag i saken, en utnevnelse som blev tilstent av møtet. Denne gang lød forslaget paa *The Evangelical Lutheran Church*. Luther Seminars rektor, dr. Gullixson, talte varmt for antagelsen av dette navn ved aa understreke ordet "Evangelical"s betydning. President Aasgaard, som hittil hadde forholdt sig helt taus i saken, talte for dette navns antagelse. Særlig fremhevet han at det kan sies aa være den Norske Kirkes egentlige navn ifølge Norges grunnlov, som sier i paragraf 2: "*Den evangelisk-lutherske Religion forbliver Statens offentlige Religion*." Han mente derfor at det vilde være historisk sammenheng i at datterkirken i Amerike førte samme navn som moderkirken i Norge. Forslaget blev enstemmig antatt.

Om dette utfall har vi lyst til aa bemerke følgende: Det forekommer oss aa være det heldigste valg under omstendighetene.

Som all vaare lesere vet, har vi beklaget — og beklager ennå — at navnebyttesaken blev bragt paa bane i tider som disse. Per-

sonlig hadde vi haapet paa en dypere og mere forstaaelsesfull bedømmelse av situasjonen i sin helhet hos Kirkeraadet. Da det haap glapp, tillot vi oss, saan halvveis, aa haape at fellesmøtet allikevel vilde utsette saken et par aars tid — skjønt vi tilstaar at *det* haap neppe gikk halvveis engang. Vi vil her faa gjenta hvad vi har sagt før i denne forbindelse: Det store flertall for navnebytte i aar er ikke aa tyde som en villet demonstrasjon mot Norge (noe som vi for resten aldri personlig har ment, og heller ikke sagt), men som et utslag av en slags nasjonalisme som uten aa være sig det selv bevisst skraaner i retning av "isolationism."

Vaare grunner for aa se paa det valgte navn som det heldigste under omstendighetene er flere. En av dem er den som dr. Gullixson nevnte; dertil slutter sig ogsaa den omstendighet at lutheranernes opprinnelige navn var: *de evangeliske*. En annen er den som dr. Aasgaard jorde oppmerksom paa. En tredje er den at dette navnet forekommer oss for en ting aa utheve vaar kirke som et uavhengig samfund paa mere distinkt vis enn de fleste av de andre foreslaatte navnene, og dertil aa ha færre ulemper enn disse.

Det tydeligste (most distinctive) navn for vaar kirke er uten all tvil det vi ennå har: Den Norsk Lutherske Kirke i Amerika. Det sier greiest hvad vi er i følge opprinnelse, aandsarv og egenart. Men naar majoriteten ikke vil ha det, er det ikke mere aa gjøre med den sak. Aa sette sig imot en klar majoritet i noe som ikke er en trossak, er uforstand, som kan utarte til vrangvilje. — Det navn som næst dette best uttrykker hvad vi er, er "The Northern Lutheran Church." Men det ligger det opprinnelige navn saa nær at det i de flestes omdømme nærmest ingen forandring vilde bli. Dessuten betegner "Northern" her i vaart land, paa historisk grunn, det som hører bare de *nordre stater* til.

Evangelisk derimot peker direkte hen paa det som for oss staar som det særpregede ved nordisk-luthersk kirkesyn og kristendomsopfatning.

Navnet "The Lutheran Church in America" vilde være et aldeles utmerket navn om vi hadde en samlet kirke. Men for oss er det nu alt for almindelig. "The United Lutheran Synod" passer paa oss fra en side sett. Men under omstendighetene lider det av to store ulemper: Det er i form alt for likt navnet paa den meget større kirke, "The United Lutheran Church"; og ordet "synode" kan hverken spraaklig eller kirkehistorisk taale sammenligning med "kirke" som betegnelse for et kristensamfund. Om "National Lutheran Church" har vi tidligere uttalt oss. Sammenlignet med "The Lutheran Church in America" og "The United Lutheran Synod" er det dog efter vaar mening langt aa foretrekke, idet en kirke med det navn meget lettere kunde holdes skilt i folks tanke fra andre lutherske samfund, uten for stor sammenblanding, omtrent som i den allerede eksisterende "American Lutheran Church"s tilfelle.

Det tør være at to innvendinger vil bli gjort mot det valgte navn. En del vil maaskje si: Men det er jo allerede navnet paa den lille synode som populært kalles paa norsk Ellingianer-samfundet og paa engelsk Eielsen Synod. Dertil er a bemerke at denne synodes fulle navn er "Den Evangeliske Lutherske Kirke i Amerika," og at den er svært lite kjent under sitt egentlige navn. Videre bør det huskes at det kirkesamfund som blev den opprinnelige "Evangeliske Lutherske Kirke i Amerika"s rette arvtager var Hauges Synode, og at den utgjør en del av vaar kirke idag. Eielsen-synoden er en separatistgruppe fra 1872 av.

Andre tør innvende at *vaar* kirke er da virkelig ikke den *eneste evangeliske* lutherske kirke i dette land. Det er naturligvis sant nok. Men heller ikke er den kirke som heter "American Lutheran Church" den eneste *amerikanske* lutherske kirke. Og ikke er "The United Lutheran Church" den eneste *forente* kirke blandt Amerikas lutherske samfund; det navn passer baade paa "American Lutheran Church" og paa oss; likeledes paa den dansk-amerikanske kirke som har "Forenede" i sitt navn.

Til slutt vil vi faa si at det er ingen mening i aa holde gaende noen som helst agitasjon i navnesaken. Den er nemlig nu avsluttet. Som paapekt, har kirkens fellesmøte — visstnok det største i dens historie

— med overveldende majoritet besluttet at navnet skulde forandres; den beslutning trenger ingen gjentagelse for aa gjelde. Dernæst tok møtet enstemmig det første skritt til aa endre konstitusjonen i følge den første beslutning; og det eneste som gjenstaar, er aa ta det annet skritt om to aar, for lovliggjøring.

Om noen vil resonnerer som saa at det kunde bli mulig, ved iherdig agitasjons-amendementet med det nye navn faar ¾ majoritet i 1946, saa vil vi faa si saa alvorlig som vi formaar: For det første er det ytterst liten sannsynlighet for at den taktikk vilde lykkes; og for det annet vilde den ikke være kristenfolk av norsk ætt verdig. Navnesaken har visstnok hatt med aandsverdier aa gjøre; men den er ingen trossak. Saa lenge den stod paa, var det rett og riktig for oss aa fremholde vaart syn paa den saa kraftig og vedvarende som mulig, men naar majoriteten har uttalt sig saa klart som i dette tilfelle, hører det til demokrati og frisinn og kristelig fordragelighet aa opføre med all agitasjon. Og noe slikt som aa melde sig ut av kirken av denne grunn, bør ikke engang nevnes, enn sie tenkes paa. Kristne mennesker melder sig ut av en menighet og et kirkesamfund bare naar sannhetens vidnesbyrd om frelsens grunn ikke lenger taales der. Gjør man det av annen grunn, er man rett og slett en *separatist*. Og unndrar man sig fra slik ydelse som ens økonomiske evne formaar, synder man i surmuleri og vrangvilje. La det ikke, selv med minste skinn av rett, sies om oss kristne som vil gaa i fromme norske fedres spor, at vi viser oss som vrangvillige separatister. Men la oss legge for dagen at vi paa verdig vis forstaar aa hevde den aandsarv som heter nordisk-luthersk kristendom.

Two Tests

By Philip E. Howard

Why not try God?

*And shall I, then apply my measures
To His transcendent heavenly treasures,
As though of gold and not of glory
Is woven all the marvelous story?*

Why not try God?

*And shall I trace the planet's track
Mete out the wild wind-driven wrack
Of storm cloud striding down the skies
The lightning flash on blinded eyes?*

Why not try God?

*Oh, I have known across the years
His mercy shining through my tears!
No new assurance do I need
To fortify or test my creed!*

Will He try me?

*Not mine to measure out His love,
Too wide its ceaseless cycles move,
But will He measure my distress
By mercy, granting me no less?*

Will He try me?

*Yes, try me as refiner tries,
And clear the dross with seeing eyes,
So try me—testing is of grace —
O Lord, that I may see Thy face!*

—S. S. T.

Are You Willing?

To close your book of complaints and to open the book of praise?

To believe other men are quite as sincere as you and to treat them with respect? To ignore what life owes you and to think about what you owe to life?

To stop looking for friendship and to start being friendly?

To be content with such things as you have and to stop whining for the things you have not?

To enjoy the simple blessings of life and to cease striving for the artificial pleasures of the day?

To cease looking for someone to help you and to devote yourself to helping others?

To accept Jesus Christ as your Savior and to let your life be an outlet for His joy, love, and peace?

Are you willing?

—Samuel Macauley Lindsay
in the *Lutheran Companion*.

The true way to be humble is not to stoop till you are smaller than yourself, but to stand at your real height against some higher nature that shall show you what the real smallness of your greatest greatness is. —*Phillips Brooks*.

We reprint this article, not because we agree with the writer in all the implications, but because it does give food for thought. It is evident that the accumulation of years does not guarantee a "Father" nor few years in the Lord's service a proof of a "novice" or "tutor". We enjoy the fresh zest of the word pictures of the writer. —V.

How Old a Pastor? . . .

"TEN THOUSAND TUTORS"

By JOHN HELMER OLSON

Pastor of First Church, St. Peter, Minn.

For though ye have ten thousand tutors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers. —1 Cor. 4: 15.

The average vacant congregation in the Augustana Synod, if given a reasonable freedom of choice, will select as its pastor—not one of the few experienced fathers in Christ, but one of the splendid ten thousand tutors. In this respect, it seems, the church of today does not differ greatly from the church in Corinth 1900 years ago, nor from the congregation of Israel in Old Testament times. We recall, perchance, some of the scathing remarks of Jeremiah, Micah, and others concerning the popularity of fairweather prophets among the ancient people of God.

It may be safest for the author to pause at this moment for definitions.

By a *father* we understand Paul to mean—an experienced Christian leader, one who has taken a few majors at least in the university of the Eternal, a man who bears upon his body some of the marks of Jesus Christ. In the very nature of things, he is usually, but not always, a person who can call himself a youth only by the exercise of his own sense of humor and the benevolence of his audience. Having been burned by a number of hot stoves, he is inclined toward caution rather than recklessness in his general attitude, is apt to be intense rather than bombastic in his speech.

A *tutor* is an inexperienced Christian leader, one who has not as yet earned his degree, or, if you prefer, his bars and chevrons, but is in the process of doing so. He has not as yet been pelted very long with the fiery darts of the evil one; bleary-eyed old Adam has not as yet annoyed him to desperation by his yellowtoothed sneers. As a consequence the tutor tends to be somewhat optimistic about himself in particular and human nature in general. He is more easily deceived, than are the fathers, by the ingenious hypocrisies of old church members, who crawl heavenward along deep, comfortable ruts.

They Are What They Are

It is clear, as a rule, that neither the fathers nor the tutors can help being anything but what they are. Youth, inexperience, enthusiasm, recklessness—these go together as do the morning and the rising of the sun. Experience, skill, sobriety, sagacity—these come with age to those who use their God-given talents. In other words, fathers are simply ripened tutors, and tutors are fathers-in-the-making. As the Negro spiritual puts it:

"The old sheep done know the road;

Young lambs must find the way!" . . .

God help both of them, for the trail ahead is steep and rocky, and enemies lurk in every crag!

The preference for tutors has reached epidemic proportions in our particular religious community. When I say that I am not holding up either the tutors or the fathers to contempt or ridicule, but simply making an honest diagnosis with the possible intent to wield the scalpel, dimly hoping that I may thereby remove some specks of malignancy from the body of the bride of Christ. I feel I have some right to do this, since I have dedicated my life to her service.

Original Sin at the Bottom

The malady originates neither in the decrepitude of the fathers, except occasionally, nor in the athletic exuberance of the tutors, but rather in the original sin lurking in that aggregation of individualists which we call a congregation; it is one of the more obtrusive and disfiguring warts on the nose of human nature. Our old Adam fears the fathers more than he fears the tutors. The experienced eyes of the former are apt to detect the early beginnings of spiritual tumors, which the average sinner would like to ignore until a more

convenient day, when the body's passions have been spent and he finds no pleasure in sinning anyway. The lips of the fathers are apt to send forth truths whose sugar-coating has been worn through in spots by time and thought. Tutors are apt to see less, to observe more casually, and consequently also speak less incisively. Therefore, our old Adam prefers the tutors.

The consequences of this attitude on the part of the Church are devastating. Because of it there flourish among us: spiritual superficiality, hypertensive activism, vain show, and a general loss of saltiness. The Church is no longer thought of as a refuge of the weary and a shelter from the world. Instead, it is visualized as a mighty army, attacking with blood-curdling yells the vices that are especially unpopular at this particular hour of history. Its main function is to enlist, train, and send forth commando Christians to strangle Abaddon in his lair, to gouge out the eyes of Mephistopheles and slice in to the jugular vein of Beelzebub. Naturally, this makes religion slightly more exciting than the inner life of the Spirit described by Rosenius, Arndt and Jeremy Taylor. But I wonder what the end of all this will be. The function of the Church being defined, so far as the average church member is concerned, almost entirely in terms of action, the fathers who cry, "Whither art thou going, little man, and why?" are pounced upon with something like holy indignation. "This is no time for contemplation!" they are told. "This is the day of battle!" And God knows it is! Yet, I wonder if we ought not to try to sneak in an idea once in a while between the boomings of our cannons or the flashes of our bayonets. Church work being evaluated almost entirely in terms of increased membership, organizational activities, quota attainments and the like, it is clear to me that we have definitely lost some treasures in the field and some pearls of great price which we will miss some day when all this racket ends.

A Leaning Tower of Pisa

When I say this, I would certainly not disparage outward success, place a premium on empty pews and doleful sermonics, or encourage the indolent in rationalizing away their deserved failures. I am only trying to say that the present day over-emphasis of the outward, as evinced by the preference for tutors, threatens to make of today's Church a leaning tower of Pisa. I am convinced that unless the Augustana Synod by the grace of God places its center of gravity a little deeper down in the soul—it is doomed to share the fate of a house built upon the sand. The feeling of so many of our people that the pastor is a kind of spiritual bell-hop who must run to God continually with the pecksniffian demands of his members, or a kind of vice president in charge of public relations, rather than a genuine, God-trained physician of souls—this attitude is bound to make of the Church ultimately a sounding brass and clanging cymbal!

If you think this is too strong an indictment, ask yourself if it is not true that if the minister of today is classified as a "success"—that success is always expressed in terms of increased membership, size of budget, and the like? And do we not all feel that if the pastor makes ten social calls on Monday afternoon, he is far more pleasing to the Lord than if he were to read ten pages in the Book or meditate three hours on a spiritual theme? Out of the meditations in the wilderness came John the Baptist, and taught the sophisticated of Jerusalem truths which they never discovered on the corner of State and Madison. They came all the way to Jordan to tear them, too, even though they were not so pleasant. Again, I say, I am not pleading for more time for day-dreaming on the part of lazy preachers. I am pleading for more thinking in the midst of today's action, lest we find ourselves in the situation of the mythical rider who "rode furiously in all directions."

Psychology or Pneumatology?

My well-considered warning is this: Beware, lest the zeal for action at any price or for any reason rob us of our message, which, after all, has to do with eternity! Beware, lest this running hither and thither deprive us of our power, which, after all, is not generated by some self-propelled interior dynamo but by the Holy Ghost.

(Alas, how often the "dynamic speaker" of today is one who knows more about mass-psychology than about Scriptural pneumatology! Let him who reads understand!)

The remedies recommended against this epidemic of superficiality are found on every spiritual pantry shelf. We must have: self-examination, contrition, confession of sins, conversion, commitment to the Kingdom. Whereas we all agree that individuals must climb these steps in the order of salvation, we are inordinately tempted to ignore them when the local congregation is considered. We forget that the Church has a very human side and can be a contemptible sinner. It often happens that a hundred Christians banding themselves together in a congregation become an organism far more pharisaical than any single member thereof. I know churches have sinned in other ways. For example, they have erected magnificent temples, far beyond their financial capacities, primarily because their neighbor congregation has just finished a building program—and it will never do to let Grace thus outstrip Hope! It is no sin to call attention to the sins of the Church as an institution. Contrariwise, it is a sin not to do so. Hence this nettling essay!

"Some Need a Groaning Jeremiah"

Applying the moral to the issue at hand: congregations, when vacant, should go in quest of a leader who is really a *pastor*, a shepherd of souls, who has gifts, irrespective of age (within reason, of course) which suit him for the particular situation. Some churches need a man with greater physical energies than others. Some need a thundering Moses, while others, having been patted on soft backs for a decade, ought to have a groaning Jeremiah in the pulpit for a while. Health is always an important consideration, but youth is no guarantee as to that. Neither is the speed of the feet that bring good tidings invariably attributable to tutors. I know of churches that have actually profited spiritually by the temporary illness of their shepherds or who have been blessed by having for some time patriarchs as their "preaching supplies."

In this connection I think of the waste of manpower in the Church between the ages of fifty and seventy. Repeatedly our synodical and conference leaders have called attention to the preference for experienced lawyers, physicians, generals and the like, and the application of this rule to the holy ministry. Alas it falls upon deaf ears, for today's church members want neither prophets nor priests but oratorical spellbinders and clever ecclesiastical promoters. It may be that the only cure for our illness is—the episcopacy. We do not have time to study that question in detail just now. However, we fear that the cure will not be permanent if it comes in the form of a new type of church government alone. It must come as a change of heart. The Church must rediscover its soul and relearn the truth that that soul needs to be saved—not by some superman preaching from a pulpit or ringing door-bells, but by a divine Saviour entering broken and contrite hearts.

But They Must Not Be "Tooters"

If the Church of today shall outlive the storms of the coming years, if it shall outlive the debacle in which we all are participants, and if it shall really take a hand in the remaking of the world after the war, or, if you prefer a less mundane statement of our task, if the Church of today shall in any sense proclaim the gospel and Kingdom of our Christ—we shall need all the fathers we have and more. We shall also need more than ten thousand tutors, provided they be not merely "tooters," but, as we have indicated above, neophytes who are in the process of becoming fathers in Christ.

If the Church shall be the Church, the bride of Christ, and an instrument of the Holy Spirit—we need not so much stagecraft as statecraft!

Thoughts

Sad will be the day for any man when he becomes satisfied with the life he is living, with the thoughts he is thinking, and the deeds he is doing; when there is not beating at the doors of his soul a desire to do something greater which he knows he was meant to do because he is a child of God.—*Phillips Brooks*.

Tired, Retired, Tiresome, and Tireless Christians

We are of course not punning on automobile "tires," which would give an entirely opposite meaning. We are speaking seriously of various types of what we believe are true Christians.

There are "tired" fellow believers. Their condition may be due to various causes. Some have become "weary of well doing" because their efforts seem to be so barren of results. The situation in the family, the local congregation and the church at large may be of such a nature that they have become discouraged. Illness or old age may have exhausted earlier energies. A weakening of spiritual rowers, due to neglect of prayer, of the Word, and of courageous testimony to their faith in Christ, may have left them stranded on the shore of the sluggish stream of their life.

Some of these have "retired." They have "quit." Possibly because they have decided that they are not wanted in the work any more, or because their work is not appreciated, warranting a sulk in some corner, or because they think they have done their share and that others ought to step in and "bear the burden of the day and the scorching heat."

Then, too, we have the "tiresome" Christians. Among these are those who "have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge." They mean well, but are officious and fussy. They butt in where they do more harm than good, not realizing that their work at cross-purposes with their fellow laborers. Some are narrow and opinionated and either refuse to listen or are incapable of entertaining the views of those who may be better informed. Some are overready to criticize and judge and condemn. Some are innocently anxious to please, to be popular, to indulge in "much speaking," to figure as "shining lights," to test the patience of those who wish they would pull at the oar instead of rocking the boat.

But there are the "tireless" Christians. They are tested and tried. There have been discouragements aplenty. Often enough from those who should have encouraged them. Satan, the world, and their own old Adam have assailed them, of course, too, false or true, have put stumbling blocks in their way. Their very best motives have been discounted and diverging views belittled. Sometimes their faith, hope, and love—all three—have burned low and become a smoking flax. And in their darker moods it seems to them as if Jesus had dismissed them from His service as incompetent.

But they "waited for Jehovah" and He "renewed their strength." They looked to Him and did not "put their confidence in princes." His Word refreshed them and His Spirit inspired them to persevere. God turned to them and said, "Thou wast wearied with the length of thy way; yet saidst thou not, It is in vain. Thou didst find a quickening of thy strength; therefore thou wast not raint" (Isa. 57:10). Not only with respect to the so-called "activities" of the church, but more especially in regard to their own spiritual life. They did not tire of giving, for instance; neither did they grow weary in prayer.

An innumerable multitude of these tireless Christians have entered into the Sabbath rest. Their faithful successors are still with us, suffering hardship with their leaders as good on "as seeing him who is invisible. They are the living and active limbs of His body. They are the hope of the world. God bless them!

CJS.

Here is the great secret of success: Work with all your might but trust not in your own power to achieve. Pray with all your might for God's guidance and blessing. Pray then work; work and pray; and again pray and work. Whether you see much fruit or little fruit, remember that God delights to bestow real blessing; this comes generally in answer to earnest believing prayer. —G. Muller.

Don't Play With Fire

(Continued from Y.P.L.L. Page)

Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price; therefore, *glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are God's*" (I Corinthians 6:19-20). This can't be done when you submit your body to the temptations of the modern dance.

The person who loves Jesus does not feel at home with the vile, filthy crowd that swears by the name of God and laughs at the dirtiest stories whether it be in some luxurious ballroom or in some dusty, smelly roadhouse. The environment and companions found in the dance hall have drained spiritual life until souls have left Christ completely and gone to the world. The dance hall does not nurture the fellowship of believers. It does not comprise the prayer and Bible study group. No, the worldly crowd goes for the modern dance. God says, "Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing" (II Corinthians 6:17). Christians who want to be so broadminded must remember, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (I John 2:15).

WHAT ABOUT THE HIGH SCHOOL DANCE?

How about the parlor dance and the chaperoned high school dance? Ex-dancing Haster Faulkner says further, "The first drink of the drunkard was just a social glass; the first game of the gambler was just a social game and three-fourths of the outcasts had a man's arm around them for the first time when they were young girls at a social dance."

The high school dance is the training ground for the ballroom, the night club, the rotten roadhouse. I asked a fine high school student how her fellow students reacted to the high school dances. Her response was, "Many of the freshmen and sophomores attend but they are too tame for most of the juniors and the seniors. They go out to the lake." I knew what that meant. Out at the lake was one of the dirtiest hellholes in the country.

Young People! *Never learn how to dance. That is the safest procedure.* You will never be sorry. Take a stand for Christ among your high school friends. They respect a real man or woman who has courage to stand up for convictions of right and wrong. Pray that **you may be used** by God to win them for Christ. Don't go with them in the ways of the world. God will give all the grace, wisdom, and strength you need to take a stand even though you may be quite alone.

It was time for the annual Junior-Senior Prom. The president of the class was one of the most brilliant students ever to be graduated. His pleasant personality and handsome appearance made him very popular. But he had courage to face his classmates and tell them that it was against his Christian convictions to have anything to do with a movement that might cause the moral downfall of any young people so he must be excused from the prom. His deep concern was rather to win the young people for Christ and the Church. Many of our Christian high school young people have followed the same procedure. Some have arranged for a social hour in beautifully decorated Church parlors following the Junior-Senior banquet meal and program.

People of the world often call those narrowminded who will not join in the dancing program. The fact of the matter is they are often the narrowminded ones for they insist that dancing is the only form of amusement.

Christian young people have the best time in the world. Your Luther League should sponsor a well organized social program which gives opportunity for fellowship and fun. Wholesome recreation and sports indoors as well as out in God's beautiful nature strengthen loyalty to Christ, build staunch moral characters, and give Christian young people opportunity to witness to their friends.

Let Christ keep you pure in His power during your youth so when your wedding day comes, you need not be ashamed of your past. Many brides on their way to the altar to meet the one sweetheart God has given, would give anything if they could erase from their lifestory those past

experiences of their youth at the dance. Many young dads would give much as they watch their small children play on the living room floor if they could destroy those pages in their own life's story when in youth they lost their purity after some dance. God wants His children to be happy now and in the future. *The only guarantee for genuine happiness is to live for Christ and let Him rule our hearts.*

Pastors and Christians of America must not lack courage to take a definite stand against the modern dance. It is very dangerous to endorse or encourage in any way a movement that is causing the moral downfall of thousands of our young people annually. The great tragedy is that the modern dance is a tool in the hand of the devil to pull young people away from Christ. *We must constantly keep before our young people the truth that it is dangerous to play with fire and that real happiness comes only to those who live wholeheartedly for Christ.* To be effective witnesses for Christ, we must pray for grace to break with the world and give our "all" to Christ and His Church.

Four young people thought they had found life with all its good times. Two of them had been confirmed in our Church, but they had joined the world. They chose the dance rather than the Luther League. On their way home from a dance at two o'clock in the morning, they drove into a stone culvert. The wrecked car, the bleeding mangled bodies—one still holding a broken liquor bottle—presented a gruesome picture. These young people played with fire. They thought they had found life. But the only word you can write across that picture is *Death*.

Young people! give your youth, your ambition, your zeal your energy, your hearty laugh, your imagination, your future, your whole life to Christ. He bought you with the great price of His own Blood that you could live for Him and His Church. Don't compromise! Don't play with the world! *Don't play with fire! Give Christ everything.* There is happiness! There is life!

"And that He died for all that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves but unto Him who died for them and rose again" (II Corinthians 5: 15).

WHERE IS YOUR FAITH?

Morris P. Peterson

And when He had said this, "They marvelled saying one to another, who then is this, that He commandeth even the winds and the water, and they obey Him?" (Luke 8:25).

This selfsame Jesus commands the powers of the spiritual kingdom today—ever in conflict with the kingdom of darkness—but He will triumph over hell.

He uses the church as His instrumentality to convey His grace to mankind through the means of the Word and sacraments. The church retards or advances His interests with its unbelief or its faith.

When we look at the stewardship program of the church today, Jesus asks this arresting question, "Where is your faith?" Is the vision of the children of God enlarged, or is it a dwarfed isolationist view? Such a view is not uncommon in America. The fields are widening, the need is terrific, the cry is deafening: "Come over and help us." Can we as a church sit with a "static" budget—a million dollar vision—amidst the challenge of a coming peace? The need is for a five-fold greater vision and faith than at present, during the present decade.

This sounds preposterous to human minds, utter foolishness to the unbelieving, but I do not anticipate that man-made endeavors will reach the goal.

Contrary to common sense, theological speculation, or traditional practice, the means of reaching such a goal lies in a simple act of obedience to the Word of the Lord in the book of the prophet Malachi 3:10, "Bring ye all the tithes... that there may be meat in my house." It will be assailed as being outside the moral code of Christians to comply with this ordinance of the Lord, but where else than in the realm of faith are the "law and prophets" to reach their greatest heights of fulfillment?

One would think in this day and age that the laws of God had been outmoded in the kingdom of faith, but rest assured the spiritual law operates as fiercely today as at

any other time. We obey, and the blessings flow—we disobey and the curses envelop us—abundant evidences even in 1943. Meditating on the third chapter of Malachi, we find it is in the kingdom of the Son, the kingdom of faith, that the offering of Judah and Jerusalem shall be pleasant as in the days of old—and the prophet begins to enumerate the sins of his day and our day.

It is as the believers in Christ take hold of the promises of God and obey them that the windows of heaven will be opened to bless the church, the nation, and the world. The devil may obscure for a time the truths of God, but, lo and behold, they come again to light, to challenge the faith of the children of God and shake the foundations of hell. It matters not if the believers are a minority, for through acts of faith, they link themselves with the infinite power of Christ who commands the economic and natural laws, and they obey Him for the benefit of His children.

Let the offerings of this generation come from hearts of faith—full and free. Use God's way (it was not shortsightedly given or ill-conceived), the tenth, the first fruits for rich or poor. Here is a layman's challenge of faith—a mighty thrust at the portals of hell. Make America an arsenal for Christ, to the world outside and America within, by supplying the house of God with abundant means for evangelization of the world; and perchance the prayers for workers will be answered quickly to speed the day of the consummation of God's thoughts for the world.

The overwhelming blessings will come after, not before, the church obeys its Lord. He challenges her to go out upon the deep. There are results there at His command. Look at Jesus, not at yourself or at the world about you as to what it does or what it thinks. We require more "reckless faith" relying on the Lord. "Prove me now herewith," He says. The church is you, His believing son or daughter. Will you hear and obey and experience His promise?

QUESTION: *What benefit, if any, does an unsaved church member have of his church membership?*

Answer: The benefit he derives naturally depends on the use he makes of his membership. If he avails himself of his church membership at all he will be benefited by associating with the kind of people who are under the influence of God's word, many of whom are saved. He himself will also hear the word of God, which he would not be likely to do were his church membership lapsed or cancelled. Since a member is more apt than a non-member to hear the word of God, the membership of an unsaved person increases his chance of being reached by the saving grace of God. Unfortunately there are unsaved members of our congregations, some of them indifferent, others selfsatisfied, still others earnest seekers. Our concern for a pure church must not prompt us to a hasty exclusion of such members from the congregation. Once they are dropped they are much harder, as a rule, to reach for the Lord than they were under a merely nominal membership. Furthermore, the first step in our treatment of nominal church members must never be simply to drop them after we have carried them for a while but rather prayerfully to seek to bring them to Christ.

QUESTION: *May not such a church member cause great harm to the church?*

Answer: Undoubtedly, for even saved church members have at times done great injury to the church of Christ and to His cause. If, for example, a congregation tolerates members who are living in open sin, both the membership of such persons and the tolerant attitude of the congregation towards them brings dishonor upon Christ and does injury to the church. Maybe there would not be so many unsaved members in the congregation if those who are saved were more concerned for the salvation of the lost.

—Bible Banner.

A Life to Lead

Corporal Everett Larson

Each has his separate life to lead,
And each his numbered days;
And none but the Divine may judge,
The justness of one's ways.

PREPARING FOR PUBLIC WORSHIP

Revelation 3: 20-22

TIMELY TOPICS

C. K. SOLBERG

It goes without saying that the preacher must come to his pulpit well-prepared with a clear and orderly message from the Word, and have prepared himself in prayer that he may come spiritfilled before his congregation. His parishioners have a right to expect it, and God expects it.

But it is also expected that the parishioner comes well-prepared to receive the message and enter into the worship in the right spirit. Before going to church he must by prayer and meditation prepare for a profitable worship when he comes to the house of God to hear the Lord speak to him.

And on coming to church, let him enter at once, take his seat, and silently pray the Holy Spirit to help him dispel disturbing thoughts throughout the service.

How common it is, especially in country congregations, to see the men gather outside the church in groups in busy conversation until the bell rings them in. They come in with their minds filled with thoughts that will disturb their worship. I once heard a preacher tell his congregations why many church-goers had little or no benefit from their worship: "They take their farm, their cattle, their business, and other things with them to church, and are busy thinking and planning about their secular problems, and would necessarily have little or nothing of the message to carry with them home." Their bodies are in the church, but their minds are elsewhere.

Another bad habit in most churches: People crowd into the back seat and leave a long row of seats towards the front empty. Fill up the front seats, and let the late-comers slip into the back seats. It looks better and it causes less disturbance after the service has begun. And then take whole-hearted part in the singing of the hymns and the responses, and put your heart into the prayer and praise offered from the altar. In the sermon God is serving you, and in the prayers offered and the hymn-singing, you are worshipping God with prayer, praise, and thanksgiving.

If you prepare yourself prayerfully for your worship in God's house, you will be blessed by the sermon and the entire worship, and will be able to translate these blessings into serving the Lord and your fellowmen through the week. After the Lord has served you in Word and Sacrament, you will be able to serve Him. One has said: "The longest sermon is not the one your pastor preached on Sunday, but the one you preach through the week as you try to live the sermon you heard on Sunday."

Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace!
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
Where there is sadness, joy.
O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
To be consoled, as to console;
To be understood, as to understand;
To be loved, as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive;
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
It is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Abraham Lincoln Said

President Lincoln, being once asked, after a long steamboat voyage along the coast, how he was, replied, "I am not feeling very well. I got pretty badly shaken up on the bay coming down, and am not altogether over it yet."

"Let me send for a bottle of champagne for you, Mr. President," said a staff officer; "that is the best remedy I know for seasickness. Won't you try it?"

"No, no, no, my young friend," replied the President, "I've seen many a man in my time seasick ashore from drinking that very article."

—The Gem.

Jeg er den gode Hyrde.

Joh. 10:11

THE SHEPHERD

Hyrden

JEG ER DØREN TIL FAARENE. Joh. 10:7.

Den gode Hyrde setter alt

liv til for faarene.

Joh. 10:11

Winnipeg, Manitoba, Andet Nr. i Juni, 1944

AVVEIER I HELLIG-GJØRELSEN

Av Johannes Daasvand

Apostelen formaner sin unge medarbeider Timoteus til aa holde fast ved "den sunde lære." Forakt ikke læren! Læren er ikke nok, hvor sund den er; der maa nytt liv til om vi skal se Guds rike. Men paa den annen side er sund bibelsk lære en god "ramme" — et hegn om livet.

Er læren sund, da er det betingelser for at livet kan være sundt. Er læren falsk, blir alt galt. Det er neppe noe omraade hvor falsk lære har et slikt fritt spillerum som paa helliggjørelses-omraadet. Vi skal prøve aa belyse to av disse falske helliggjørelses-lærdommer som har forvillet mange ærlige sjeler.

Syndefrihets-læren

Hvad gaar den ut paa? Ved en ny aandelig oplevelse blir den troende kvitt synderoten i sin natur, læres det. I en traktat som spredes av "The Apostolic Faith Mission," oversatt paa norsk av "Den apostoliske tro's venner, heter det bl. a.: — "Helliggjørelsen er rensning fra arvesynden. Den tar ut roten til aa synde og all kjødelighet. Den adamittiske natur er aldeles ødelagt. Naar du virkelig er frelst, da gaar synden ut av ditt liv. Gud tar ut bitterhetens og kjødelighetens rot. Det er lett aa leve dette liv. Det lever sig selv. Aa holde den gamle natur nede er ikke haardt, for den er borte. Den medfødte fordervelse, den syndige natur blir utryddet, utrenset og ødelagt ved det annet naadeverk, helliggjørelsen." — Saa langt traktaten.

Det eneste som vi kan rose ved disse uttalelser, er deres utvetydighet. Ingen behøver aa være i tvil om hvad her menes. "Den medfødte fordervelse, den syndige natur blir utryddet, utrenset og ødelagt ved det annet naadeverk, helliggjørelsen," sies det. Det er tydelig tale.

Men er den bibelsk? Det er det store spørsmaal. Vi mener at denne lære er helt ubibelsk. Ukjent baade i det Gamle og det Nye Testamente, og skikket til aa vill-lede og føre ærlige sjeler bort fra sannheten og fra enfoldigheten i Kristus.

Den er bygget paa skriftord som er tatt ut fra sin sammenheng, altsaa løseverne citater fra den hellige bok.

Vi skal nu høre endel klare, tydelige ord fra Skriften som viser oss at kjødet, "den medfødte fordervelse," er i den troende, selv om han har faatt en ny natur og saaledes ikke lenger "lever etter kjødet."

Til de troende galater skriver apostelen: "Bruk bare ikke friheten til en leilighet for kjødet." En saadan formaning vilde være meningsløs dersom kjødet i dem var "utryddet, utrenset og ødelagt."

I Jakobs Brev, 1, 14, staar skrevet: "Enhver (troende) fristes naar han drages og lokkes av sin egen lyst." "Sin egen lyst" — hvad er det annet enn "den medfødte fordervelse"?

Til de troende i Kolossæ staar det skrevet: "Saa død da eders jordiske lemmer, utukt, urenhet," o.s.v. (Kol. 3, 5.) Hvad er det som skal dødes, om ikke kjødet? I Gal. 5, 17 leser vi om den indre kamp i den troendes person, nettop fordi kjødet er i ham: "Kjødet begjærer mot Aanden og Aanden mot kjødet." Hvordan kan kjødet begjære dersom det er ødelagt?

Den gamle troshelt Paulus sier i Romerbrevet, 7, 18: "Jeg vet at i mig, det er i mitt kjød, bor intet godt."

Han var vel uten tvil den mest helliggjørte mann som har vandret paa denne jord. Han var dog ikke kvitt kjødet — den onde natur. Men er det ikke først i det attende kapitel at det tales om det frigjorte liv? Du møter "kjødet" ogsaa der: "Ti dersom I lever etter kjødet, da skal I dø, men dersom I dører legemets gjerninger ved Aanden, skal I leve" (v. 13).

Vi ser altsaa at denne lære ikke har medhold i Skriften, lest i sin sammenheng.

Ingen ser klarere kjødets heslige karakter enn den kristne som lever nær Gud. Jo klarere lyset er i stuen din, desto mer ser

du av støvet derinne. Om du derfor møter en bekjenner som sier at han er syndefri, i betydning av at kjødet er utryddet av hans person, da har du i beste fall nøtt en kristen som ever i aandelig maaneskinn. I verste fall har du møtt en som sannhetens aand er veket fra.

"Dersom vi sier vi ikke har synd, da daarer vi oss selv og sannheten er ikke i oss" (I Johs. 1, 8).

Denne falske helliggjørelseslære rammes av ordet i I Tim. 4, 1: "Men Aanden sier uttrykkelig at i de kommende tider skal noen falle fra troen og holde sig til forførende aandere og djevles lærdommer."

Slarveskaps-læren

En annen falsk helliggjørelses-retning vil vi kalle for slarveskaps-læren. Den er paa en maate en motsætning til syndefrihets-læren.

Ingen kan bli fullkommen, sier man. Jeg er nu engang slik. Det kan ikke bli anderledes. Saa klager man og sukker, og synder og synder igjen og igjen. Ligger under for den samme synd aar efter aar. Den som klager mest over synd, er den mest opriktige og helliggjørte kristen. Det aa bli helliggjørt er aa bli verre og verre, mer og mer syndig, sies det.

Ja, dersom man med syndig mener at man ser sig selv i Guds lys i hjertets innerste, da er det forstaaelig. Men dersom man mener at en troende maa ligge under for synd, da er det imot Skriftens lære. Da rammes man av ordet: "For eders skyld spottes Guds navn —"

Like sikkert som Skriften ikke lærer utryddelse av arvesynden eller kjødet, like sikkert lærer den at en troende kan seire ved naaden. Det er den Hellige Aands gjerning aa vise oss det. Vi skal nu høre noen ord som viser oss troende noe av baade maalet og midlene.

"Ti Guds naade er aapenbaret... den optukter oss til aa fornekte ugudelighet og de verdslige lyster, og leve tuktigt og rettferdig og gudelig i den nuværende verden" (Tit. 2, 11—12).

Naaden optukter. Et merkelig ord, som kun den gjenfødte troende helt forstaar. "La derfor ikke synden (kjødet) herske i eders dødelige legemer, saa I lyder dets lyster... Ti synden skal ikke herske over eder. I er jo ikke under loven, men under naaden" (Rom. 6, 12 og 14).

Selv om kjødet er i den troende, saa er han ikke skyldig aa leve efter det. Han er lovet seier. Det er Bibelens lære. "Vandre i Aanden, saa skal I ikke fullbyrde kjødets begjæring" (Gal. 5, 17). "Jeg formaar alt i ham som gjør mig sterk" (Fil. 4, 13).

Paa en gaard levde en troende mann som var en Kristi vellukt for Gud. Hans ugudelige nabo lurte paa anledning til aa faa ham ut av balance. En dag kom den troende manns hund og jaget en av hans sauer. Den troende holdt paa aa pløie og visste ingenting om det som var hendt. Plutselig minner Aanden ham: — Du maa be! — Det passet ikke nettop nu da han var i fullt arbeide. Guds Aand-minnet igjen. Jo, det maa være noe. Hestene faar staa. Bak en sten ber han Herren hjelpe sig hvis det er noe særs som staar paa.

Nu kom naboen med mørkt ansikt og skjelte ham ut saa grusomt som det vel kunde la sig gjøre. Da han hadde rast ut, sier den troende: "Dette var riktig leit, men ta nu den beste av mine sauer for den skade som er voldt din."

Han seiret i Guds kraft.

Motstanderen bad om undskyldning. Han skulde ikke blitt sint, for det var jo ikke noe aa bli fornærmet for. Kommet hjem møter han en av sine venner, og saa sier han: "De er noen raringer, disse bønnefolk. Man kan da ikke faa dem sint engang."

Dette blev middel til den ugudelige nabos omvendelse.

Troende leser, la det være maalet for vaart kristenliv: et liv i seier over synden, til Guds ære. Og la maalet staa der selvom du ikke har naadd op til det.

Maal dig med Guds "alen", ikke med din egen. Slaar vi av paa maalet for helliggjørelsen, da blir ordet om Kristus og naaden bare snakk i vaar munn. Men er

REGNSKAPETS DAG.

"Ikke en øre faar De av mig, prest, ikke en øre!"

Proprietær Raukland var hidsig og rød i ansiktet, idet han nesten ropte ut disse ord.

Pastor Svensen lenet sig tilbake i stolen og mødte hans blik med stor ro. Det var hans første visit hos den rike godseier, som nylig hadde kjøpt stedets største eiendom, den saakaldte "Herregaard", og det tegnet for øieblikke til at skulle bli ogsaa hans sidste.

"Det er jo ikke min egen sak, jeg taler," sa han stilfærdig. "Jeg ber Dem bare betenke, hvilket ansvar rikdom gir. Og disse hjem, som jeg nevnte for Dem, og som vilde være saa paakrevet netop her, baade det for gamle- og barnehjemmet —"

"Jeg bryr mig ikke en ødt om det hele", sa proprietæren og slog i bordet. "Det jeg vet er, at jeg ikke vil hjelpe Dem. De setter bygden paa ende for at motarbeide mit valg — jeg som har været stortingsmand i to perioder! Altsammen for disse elendige sakernes skyld, som dere har faat op paa programmet. Totalistvrøvl og jeg vet ikke hvad!"

"Jeg tar ikke egentlig noen aktiv del i politikken," sa presten. "Men som avholdsmand har jeg jo holdt en del møter, og folk vet, hvad jeg mener om den ting. At De ser saken fra et andet synspunkt, forstaar jeg saa vel. Men det er nu engang saa, at de forskjellige retninger maa bekjempe hverandre, og Gud styre det til det bedste, saa sandt vi bare bruker ærlige vaapen og handler efter vor samvittighet. Den ting skulde ikke behøve at gjøre os til uvenner, proprietær Raukland!"

Raukland saa lidt mildere ut.

"Ja, De faar nu snud og dreiet paa det, De," sa han. "Jeg er ikke en mand av mange ord. Men det skal jeg dog love Dem, at hvis jeg noengang kommer til at se disse tingene anderledes, skal jeg hjelpe Dem. Ikke før! Og det kan bli lenge til, min kjære prest!"

Men da presten Svensen var gaar, gik Raukland lenge op og ned ad gulvet i dype tanker. Tilslut lo han lidt og nikket med hodet.

"Egentlig likte jeg den fyren," sa han høit. "Men presse mynt ut av mig — det skal han være blaa for at faa gjort! Ha, ha!"

Det blev en anstrengende høst for Raukland. Han var en flink taler og drog om fra folkemøte til folkemøte. Hans valg syntes nesten sikret; nu var det bare et par steder igjen, hvor han absolut burde optræde, mente hans meningsfeller. Egentlig skulde han undt sig lidt hvile først, for han var sliten nu. Men hvilen kunde han jo ta senere; og saa drog han avsted igjen en raakold høstaften. Møtet greide han, men da han kom hjem, maatte han gaa tilsengs med engang.

Det blev til lungebetendelse; langvarig og alvorlig. Det var overanstrengelsen, som var gaar iforveien, som var det farligste, sa doktoren; for han hadde likesom saa liten motstandskraft. Snart vidste alle, at dødens engel svevet over "Herregaarden".

Propietær Raukland var ved sin fulde bevidsthed. En klar hjerne hadde han altid hat, og han beholdt den endog like ind i døden. Han laa der med puterne støttet høit op under sig og saa ut gjennom vinduet paa løvet som faldt. Saaledes var det ogsaa med menneskelivet — det var som "markens græs, der er idag, men imorgen skjæres av". Snart skulde ogsaa hans livs-traad være overskaaren.

Han laa der time efter time og tenkte, slik som enkelte mennesker aldrig har anledning til at tenke, og som andre kanskje ikke tør tenke. Han prøvet at gjøre op sit regnskap, som den kloke mand han var, før teppet faldt.

Hvor snart det var kommet til det, at der maatte "gjøres op"! Han var blot et par aar over 60, og han skulde egentlig først nu til at nyde frukterne av sit livs arbeide. Han var begyndt i en ringe stil-

maalet klart, da blir vi ikke tilfreds med oss selv — men faar i sannhet daglig bruk for Guds naade.

ling og med smaa forventninger til livet, men heldet hadde fulgt ham, og han var blitt en rik mand. Politiken hadde været en løftestang for ham; han hadde svunget sig op ved hjelp av sine partifeller og det med rette, hadde han ment; for han hadde været en dyktig politiker og gjort sit parti store tjenester. Og nu hadde han naaet sine ønskers maal ogsaa i en anden retning: at kunne skaffe sig og sine et vakkert, komfortabelt landig hjem. Ja, han hadde "utvidet sine lader og bygget dem større"; men "i denne nat skulde hans sjel kreves av ham".

Hans liv var i fare, og den vesentligste grund var overanstrengelse. Hadde han ikke i den grad anspendt alle krefter foran valget, kunde han vistnok klart sykdommen, hadde doktoren sagt. Til hvad nytte hadde egentlig det hele været? Han skulde ønsket nu, at han ikke saadan hadde kastet sig op i politikken. Hvor underlig, hvor litet det hele interesserte ham, der han laa. Han hørte blot kamptummelen som en lyd i det fjerne.

Han fik da være glad over, at han fik tid til at se sine papirer igjennem. Der var dem, som slet ikke fik anledning til at gjøre regnskapet op. En plutselig død rev dem bort der de gik midt i livets travelhet. Men han fik lov til at se tilbake og veie det onde mot det gode, av hvad livet hadde bragt ham, overveie dets gleder og sorger, det opfylde haap og de ikke netop saa mange skuffelser. Hvorfor mon denne rolige overveielsens tid var blitt git ham?

Saaledes laa proprietær Raukland time efter time og tenkte ved sig selv. Og blandt de mange tanker var der en, som mere og mere tok skikkelse og trengte alle de andre tilside: at naar alt kommer til alt, naar en ser tilbake paa sit liv ved terskelen til det hinsidige, da er der andre ting, som har mere værdi end denne verdens rikdom, anseelse og makt.

Hvad hadde han gjort for de ringe og nødlidende i verden? Litet. Hvem hadde han, som vilde motta ham i de evige boliger? Ingen. Han hadde ikke tørret noen taarer, ikke trøstet enker og faderløse. Og det kunde ha været saa ganske anderledes. En bitter tanke nu det var forsent.

En aften kom der et bud til prestegaarden — det var et brev til presten, diktert av proprietær Raukland og skrevet av hans hustru.

"Doktoren tror jeg skal dø," stod der. "Kanske det blir saa — kanskje ogsaa ikke. Der er endnu en liten mulighet for, at jeg kan staa det over. Men medens det er tid, vil jeg rette lidt paa, hvad jeg har forsynt i livet. Derfor har jeg i mit testamente sat av 20,000 kroner til bruk for de trengende her i menigheten. De kan anvende dem, som De vil Hvis jeg lever, skal renterne like fuldt utbetales Dem. Jeg vilde sige Dem dette nu, fordi jeg lovet Dem at la Dem faa vite det, hvis jeg skiftet sind."

Det hadde kostet den døende mand ikke litet at gjøre dette. Folk vilde si, at han var blitt ræd nu foran dødens port og vilde kjøpe sig adgang til himmelen. Og det holdt haardt for det stolte sind at ydmyge sig for presten.

Men han gjorde det. Han vilde tat et skridt i det mindste paa den rette vei, før han døde. Han vilde ha stillet sig paa den side, hvor de stod, som kjempet kampen mot det onde og uretfærdige i verden og løftet retfærdighetens og barmhjertighetens fane.

Men Raukland døde ikke. Den nat sov han godt for første gang paa lange tider, og sykdommen tok en vending til det bedre. Den rike mand stod op fra sit leie som en "fattig i aanden og hungret efter retfærdighet." (Utvalgt.)

Hvor Gud ser et ydmygt hjerte, der hviler hans øie paa det for at styrke det med sin naade.

* * *

God gave His children Memory that in Life's Garden there might be June roses in December.

* * *

Convention Plans

The plans for our district convention at Edmonton July 27-30 are going forward. Names of some of the Luther Leaguers who will be presenting topics at the gathering have been reported to your president. Other circuits are a bit slower in taking action on the assignments given them, but we trust that all are working faithfully on their respective responsibilities.

Pastor Johnson reports that local arrangements are proceeding satisfactorily. Be sure to inform the Edmonton committee as soon as possible that you are coming. Our dynamic executive secretary, Pastor Oscar C. Hanson, suggests that the goal should be two delegates from every local league. What is your league doing? You who are at some distance from Edmonton may feel that the expense of sending even one delegate is too great. But are you trying to raise the necessary funds? In times like these we need the inspiration that comes from gathering together about God's Word. Hence we look for a big delegation. But it is very necessary that the Edmonton leaguers shall have a fairly accurate picture in advance of the size of the total delegation.

As in other years, your executive is counting on volunteer groups or soloists to furnish the music for our sessions. If the Lord has given you a singing voice, it is not boastfulness if you offer to give a musical number. You are simply making use of your God-given talent. Local and circuit officers should come to the convention ready to suggest to the district executive items that should appear on our program.

Again let it be emphasized that the spiritual blessings of our convention will depend on the prayer that has preceded it. We earnestly call upon every Christian Leaguer to be faithful in asking God, "who giveth liberally and upbraideth not", to richly glorify Himself at our gathering of Lutheran youth.

Youth for Christ Offerings

According to the information at hand on May 24, three local leagues in our district are on the honor roll for contributions of \$25.00 or more. These are the locals at Calgary, Prince Albert and S.L.B.I. Before the year is out, undoubtedly a considerable number more will have joined this group. A person is not a Christian because he gives. But if he is a Christian, one who has been bought with a great price, he most assuredly will give to the work of the Gospel.

Circuit Convention Plans

The Saskatoon Circuit Luther League will hold its convention July 7-9 in conjunction with the Circuit Bible Camp at Outlook. A good attendance is expected. Speakers will be Dr. J. R. Lavik, Miss Avis Haug, Alfred Tysseland (student assistant this summer to Pastor Knutson at Hanley), and a group from the Saskatoon local league.

The Prince Albert Circuit Luther League is already making its plans for its fall convention to be held at Saron Church November 2-5.

Precepts For Young Men

Always speak the truth.
Never speak evil of anyone.
Keep good company or none.
Live up to your engagements.
Be just before you are generous.
Never play at any game of chance.
Drink no kind of intoxicating liquor.
Good character is above all things else.
Keep your own secrets, if you have any.
Never borrow if you possibly can help it.
Keep yourself innocent if you would be happy.
When you speak to a person look him in the face.
Ever live (misfortune excepted) within your income.
Small and steady gains means competency with a tranquil mind.
Your character cannot be essentially injured, except by your own acts.
—Selected.

No child of God ever falls at once into the mire of sin. All declension begins in unwatchfulness and neglect of secret dealing with God, whereby Satan finds a door of entrance into the heart, and we are taken in his snares.—Robert C. Chapman.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S LUTHER LEAGUE

Editor, Rev. G. O. Evenson, Outlook, Sask.

"The work which thou hast give me... The men whom thou gavest me... The words which thou gavest me" (John 17: 4, 6, 8). These are statements made by Christ in His high-priestly prayer. Dare we not humbly apply them to ourselves? Then they become a stirring inspiration to every believer. They tell him that God has a work for him to do. More than that, they declare that in God's plan there are certain individuals whom he can touch as no one else for eternity. And yet more, they affirm that he is to speak a message that comes from God. Thus everything in God's wondrous plan is so prepared that it is possible for him to truly glorify God here on earth.

Luther Leaguers, make a full surrender of your lives to God, that He may have them for His use. Prayerfully seek His will in His Word. In faith make use of every opportunity to live Christ among your fellow-men, for it is those with whom you are in frequent fellowship that are now those whom you can touch for Christ. Fill your mind with Scripture, that you may be able to speak His message. Then in truth your labor will not be vain in the Lord.

DON'T PLAY WITH FIRE

By Oscar C. Hanson

Playing out in the farmyard one day, a young boy decided to use two matches which he carried in his pocket. He set fire to some rubbish which his Daddy had piled behind one of the buildings. Soon he thought he was having the best time of his life as he saw the color of the blaze, heard the crackling of the flame, smelled the odor of gray smoke and felt the warmth of the fire. Before he realized what had happened, a gust of wind set his overalls on fire. In frenzy, he screamed, he ran. Then he rolled in the grass. His mother became frantic when she discovered what had happened. In the hospital, Bobbie hovered in pain between life and death for several days. Finally he died. Bobbie had been warned of the danger of fire but in a weak moment, he forgot. He played with fire and he was burned. He died.

Young people by the thousands in America are in pain and misery of body and soul because they have played with the fire of lust and temptation. Annually thousands of young men and women in America burn their bodies and souls with shame and disgrace, physical and spiritual ruin because of the modern dance. *The dance is a fire. It burns the body, the mind and the soul.* With all the earnestness of my heart, I plead with you in the name of Christ, in the name of your happiness now and in the future—*don't play with fire.*

The dance has its basis in the passions of human nature. The low lights, the late hours, the swing music, the nearby cocktail bar, the close embrace of man and woman arouse the lusts and passions of the flesh to impure thoughts on the dance floor and to immoral sexual relations following the dance. Thousands annually play with this fire and are burned—reputations gone, characters broken, the scarlet letter written on their bosom.

WHAT ARE THE FACTS?

A former Chief of Police in New York City declared, in the light of his experiences, that *three-fourths of the fallen girls in the city are ruined by dancing.*

Mrs. E. M. Whittemore, the founder of the "Door of Hope" homes in New York and other cities, who has for over a generation mothered all of the fallen girls of the city whom she could reach, said that through her experiences for over thirty years, she found that *seven out of ten of the fallen girls came to their moral ruin directly or indirectly through the dance...*

Mr. T. A. Faulkner, who was for many years a prominent dancing master and who was President of the Dancing Masters' Association of the Pacific Coast, was converted. His testimony included the statements: "It is a startling fact, but a fact nevertheless, that *two-thirds* of the girls who enter dancing schools are ruined before the year is out. *Three-fourths* of the

outcasts had a man's arm about them for the first time when they were young girls at a social dance. *Of 200 brothel inmates whom I talked with personally, 163 regarded the dancing school and the ballroom as the direct cause of their downfall.*"

Archbishop Spaulding of the Roman Catholic Church says, "The confessional reveals that *nineteen-twentieths of all Roman Catholic fallen women trace the beginning of their sad state to the modern dance.*"

Dr. William A. McKeever, Head of the Child Welfare in the University of Kansas, says: "The new social dance with which millions of our adolescent young people are now crazed is a dance of death. The devil is the author and the underworld its place of origin and proper habitat. The young couples dance in close embrace with pelvic parts of their bodies in close contact. Thus the generative organs are overstimulated and the chemical processes are rendered abnormal."

The inmates of one State Reformatory are required to give a statement as to where the sexual act took place. In the majority of cases, they all answer, "While returning from the dance."

The matron of a home for fallen women in Los Angeles says: "*Seven-tenths of the girls received here have fallen through dancing and its influence.*" Figures available from all our rescue homes tell the same story. But this is only a part of the tragic picture. For every fallen woman there is perhaps more than one fallen man chargeable to the influence of the dance. Then there are the couples who are guilty of immorality following the dance but no children are born.

We could continue to quote figures and statistics but you get the picture. Can I as a loyal American endorse, approve, or have anything to do with a movement that is ruining thousands of young American men and women annually? The modern dance is a moral menace. It is a cancerous germ that is eating its way into the moral fibre of American youth. It is fire that burns the body, mind, and soul to a painful death of destruction. *Young America! Don't play with fire!*

But you say, "I dance and I don't have immoral thoughts and I have not been guilty of immoral practices." I don't doubt your honest sincere confession. If you can say that you press the body of the opposite sex to yours in the modern dance in the atmosphere of the dim lights and enticing music, and never have an impure thought or desire, you are one in thousands who are that strong. You do not know, on the other hand, what your dancing is doing to your partner. If you say that you can dance and be pure and clean in mind and body (I don't want to refute you) I just want to ask you one question, "Do you have a sister?" Perhaps she isn't as strong as you are. She goes to the dance because you do. Wouldn't it be terrible to be the cause of her downfall?

The pastor was called to the hospital. The patient was a girl confirmed about three years previously. She was the unmarried mother of a baby girl just born. In tears she told her story. "I became irregular in Church. I didn't care whether I missed Luther League and Sunday School. I began chasing around. I learned how to dance in our high school. Then we went to taverns, night clubs. The faster the company the better I liked it." She cried so she could hardly finish her story. "It happened after a dance. I had been drinking. Oh, why—why did I ever start?" At the foot of the bed were her Mother and Dad, both weeping. They had had hopes and ambitions for their daughter. Now they were ashamed to face anyone. She had fallen in sin. *She had played with fire.* Young people! Don't touch it. Leave it alone. Never learn how to dance. That is the safest procedure. From the moral standpoint, as a loyal American citizen, I must condemn such a menace.

WHAT IS THE CHRISTIAN ANSWER?

How about the Christian and his attitude toward the dance? The fact that you do not dance, drink or gamble does not make you a Christian. Nor are you a Christian because you pray, read your Bible, or go

to church. The basic question is: Do you possess Jesus Christ as your Savior? Do you believe that He died on the Cross for all your sins and that in Him and through Him alone you are saved? Then you are a Christian. Christianity is not a series of "do's" and "don'ts" but a personal relationship to the living Savior Jesus Christ of the Word who died for our sins. Jesus said, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36). God's Word also says: "And this is the record that God hath given to us eternal life and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (I John 5: 11-12).

The first question you must face is not "Is it wrong to dance?" But the most important issue you must face first is, "*Am I saved? Am I a Christian? Am I right with God?*" You must settle this first. Confess all your sins to God now and put all your trust in Jesus Christ as your only Savior. If you have been playing with sin and have gone with the worldly crowd, come to the Cross for forgiveness and a new beginning to live for Christ and serve Him. It is the Blood of Jesus Christ alone that can cleanse us from our sins and make us fit for Heaven. Daily we must be cleansed by this Christ of our Baptism. Take the many promises He gives you in the Bible. Underline them. Believe them. Memorize them. Ask this Christ not only to be your Savior but also your King and Lord. Let Him rule in your heart. Then you want Him to be the center of your life and your first concern will be that other souls may find Christ and be saved. Learn from experience the thrill of living "all out" for Christ.

Some Christians like the border line. Their question is constantly, "Can I do this and still be a Christian?" rather than the prayer, "Lord, show me how I can be a greater power for Thee." Every choice for the Christian should be faced with the question: "Does this bring me closer to Christ? Does it help me to be a better witness for Him?" As a Christian I want to take part only in that which brings me closer to Christ and makes me more effective for Him.

Does dancing bring me closer to Christ? Does it help me to live more effectively and win souls for Him? If it doesn't, as a Christian I must have nothing to do with it and constantly warn others of its dangers. I do not say that you can't find a single Christian on the dance floor but I do believe that one can't remain a Christian very long and take part in the modern dance. *I do not believe that any one can sincerely pray the Lord's Prayer with its petition "Lead us not into temptation" and continue to take part in the dance. To dance is to walk into temptation.* It is playing with fire, flirting with sin. The Christian wants to stay away from temptation, sin, and evil. Jesus said, "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation." In Romans 8:14 we read: "For as many as are the sons of God." The Spirit of God will not lead you into the temptation of the dance.

As a Christian I take seriously the words in I Corinthians 10:31, "Whether therefore ye eat or drink or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." One can't take part in the modern dance to the glory of God. "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus giving thanks to God and the Father by Him" (Colossians 3:17). I do not believe any honest person can dance in the name of Jesus giving thanks to God.

The Christian prays, "God, make my mind, my heart, my body, clean and pure." The modern dance with its close embrace kindles impure thoughts and desires in many young hearts. Jesus says, "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery; but I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matthew 5:27-28). If you are a Christian, God says to you, "What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the

(Continued in SHEPHERD INSERT)